conduct themselves in a manner "socially inferior" to "intelligent and refined patients." Patients are treated as "general merchandise," and "voluntary patients" -- ie., like himself -- have to "leave their individuality outside the hospital doors" -- which he for one is loathe to do. So much for the rhetoric of an "individual approach." Suffering acutely from the effects of tubercular peritonitis, and depressed over his blighted prospects, Mr. Alger repeatedly attempted to commit suicide -- his own life was conspicuous for the absence of anything like "personal influence."

He describes how, after his mother's death, he left home to live in a boarding house. He seems to have spent a lot of time brooding in his room, when he first began to have delusions that "invisible people are around me." He feels that they are "sitting beside me and making fun of what I am thinking and writing" -- at this very moment. He had similar delusions while working for a tester at General Electric. People said he studied too much. He underlines phrases like "at home" in order to qualify them, because "I can never remember the time when I actually did feel at home." He feels that this sense of alienation contributed to a sort of reversal whereby he was unwilling to "accept facts as facts," but over-ready to believe anything "in the nature of a hypothesis or theory."

Such distortion extended to his relationships with people. He distrusted his "so-called relatives," but increasingly came to believe in some remote "someone that I could trust." He began to feel that he "didn't belong to the country at all," and spent more time in the library, reading books "relating to foreign countries." He relates how he spent his time "mentally designing" the fortification of an island hide-away he wanted to escape to. "The magazines, my private suite, the various style of uniforms, the map-room, etc." became more real to him "than anything that actually happened around about me." He designed his "Perpetual Motion Machine" in order to supply himself with coal. He wonder if aliens from "some other planet" where he had been the prince are trying to "make me go crazy" so that he can never return to power. People say he studies too much. He supposes he does, "on such a problem, so personal." It is hard to believe that if Clarke's "approach" had been operative, that is personal, his own "case" would not have been read more favorably -- and a lot sooner.